

Approved 11.12.14

TOWN OF WENHAM  
Finance & Advisory Committee  
Meeting of October 16, 2014  
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Board and Committee members, a meeting of the Finance & Advisory Committee (FinCom) was held on Thursday, OCTOBER 16, 2014 at 6:30 PM in the Selectmen Chambers.  
This meeting was recorded with permission by HWCAM.

Public Information:

Agenda; Reserve Fund Transfers; Liaison Assignments; Meeting Schedule; Minutes – July 14, 2014

- **Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Chairman Lucy.

Committee Present: Michael Lucy, Chair; Hilly Ebling, Vice Chair; Ned Flynn; Richard Quinn; Mike Therrien  
Also Present: Mark Andrews, Town Administrator; Angel Wills, Town Finance Director/Accountant; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

- **Chairman and Town Administrator's Reports**

Chairman Lucy acknowledged a letter of resignation from Kat Mansfield dated September 2014, and thanked her for her work on the Finance Committee. Any resident interested in filling the vacant seat should submit a "Letter of Intent" to the Town Administrator.

Chairman Lucy reported he met with Rick Sprinkle, the new Chair of the Hamilton Finance Committee and talked about collaboration about joint programs, including the school district. There is a joint meeting of the Hamilton and Wenham finance committees with the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD) leadership team, regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 budget. This meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2014.

Mr. Andrews cautioned that this is an election year for the state governor. The governor elect will have an additional month to put together the state's budget, therefore, the state's budget information to the Town / HWRSD i.e. regional transportation, chapter 70, chapter 90 funding, will be delayed.

The Auditors continue to work with Baystate Municipal Accounting to close FY 2014. Two items, a capital purchase and police department details is being reviewed at this time.

- **Reserve Fund Transfer Requests**– October 15, 2014

The following Reserve Fund Transfers (RFT) was presented to the Committee for consideration; the current balance of the Reserve Fund is \$150,000 and will be reduced to \$101,000 if all the reserve funds are approved.

**a. Joint Pool Study \$6,000** - To fund the conceptual design and cost estimate for a (potential) HW Pool

This expenditure is extraordinary and/or unforeseen expenses due to recommendation from the Pool Working Group.

Sean Timmons, Director of Recreation was present to speak to the RFT requests.

Regarding the pool study, the proposal is for the town of Wenham, the Town of Hamilton, and the joint Recreation Department to equally share the total cost of this report. The review is to be done in December and prepared for a public release in January. It was noted that Community Preservation Act Funds could be used towards a pool with town meeting approval. There was a general discussion of understanding that this study is to bring additional

Approved 11.12.14

information such as location, design, funding, etc to the residents to help with the decision making process. Mr. Timmons noted that the project is being shrunk to reduce the cost; no cost objective has been set to date. The Chairman requested the Committee support the RFT to get the study and information to the voters.

*Vote: Mr. Ebling moved, and it was seconded, to approve the RFT of \$6,000 for the recreation pool study. The motion carried unanimously.*

b. Joint Recreation Department Study \$2,000 - The BOS approved to fund the joint recreation turf study for review of the High School Athletic Field per Gale Recreation Master Plan.

This expenditure is extraordinary and/or unforeseen expenses due to the Joint Recreation Committee formed after the ATM.

Mr. Timmons explained that Wenham's share is one fourth of the cost for an athletic field review at the high school. This is based on the report included in the Master Plan done two years ago that eleven of the twenty-two athletic fields in Hamilton/Wenham are over used. The recommendation was make more fields or better facilitate the fields at the high school.

*Vote: Mr. Flynn moved, and it was seconded, to approve the RFT of \$2,000 for the recreation turf study. The motion carried unanimously.*

c. Finance Department Salaries \$15,000 - This RFT is to fund the Finance Director / Accountant position.

This expenditure is extraordinary and/or unforeseen expenses because at the time of the Annual Town Meeting it was unforeseen that a full time finance director would be hired.

The money was budgeted for this work but was locked in the expense line for consulting not the salaried position that was ultimately chosen. Four RFTs, for \$15,000 each, will be requested bimonthly through April 2015, after which interdepartmental transfers can be made.

Mr. Therrien questioned the process and why the total amount needed was not being transferred.

The process of line item voting at Town meeting was reviewed, and it was noted the salary transfers were being paced to not draw down the reserve fund and allow the revenues to correspond with the expenses. It was noted if necessary a special town meeting could be called to transfer money into the Reserve Fund.

*Vote: Mr. Flynn moved, and it was seconded, to approve the reserve fund transfer of \$15,000 for Finance Director's salary. The motion carried unanimously.*

d. Legal Base Study and Intern \$10,000 - To fund a paralegal intern to assist Town Counsel in updating the Legal Base Study and to assist in the transition of the Town Counsel position.

This expenditure is extraordinary and/or unforeseen expenses because the intent of Town Counsel was unknown at the time of the ATM.

Mr. Andrews reviewed that Town Counsel has indicated he will be transitioning into retirement and he would update the Legal Study before retiring. An intern is being sought, not only to assist Mr. Weaver with the study, but also to work with Mr. Weaver with the intent to be the Town Counsel upon Mr. Weaver's retirement.

*Vote: Mr. Ebling moved, and it was seconded, to approve the RFT of \$10,000 to the legal study. The motion carried unanimously.*

e. Classification and Compensation Study—Non Union Employees \$11,500 -To perform classification and compensation study for all full time non-union employees.

This expenditure is extraordinary and/or unforeseen expenses due to recent request of the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Andrews reviewed this is a follow up to the town hall report regarding job descriptions and department functions. The Collins Center of UMass will be contracted to provide the town with a detailed report regarding market rates for each full-time non-union positions for consideration during the budget preparation.

Mr. Flynn commented that although he agreed with the study being done, he questioned why it is a reserve fund transfer. Mr. Andrews responded that this was not built into the FY 2015 budget as the library salary study was budgeted. In addition, the Board of Selectmen asked that this the classification and compensation study be conducted at their spring retreat on June 27, 2014 and follow up meetings in September 2014.

Approved 11.12.14

*Vote: Mr. Ebling moved and it was seconded, to approve the RFT of \$11,500 for the Classification/Compensation Study. The motion carried by majority vote with Mr. Flynn abstaining.*

f. Telecommunications Upgrade \$3,632 - To upgrade Town phone lines in order to avoid future interruption of incoming calls. The Town Administrator classified this upgrade as an emergency matter that had to be addressed immediately.

This expenditure is extraordinary and/or unforeseen expenses due to recent outage Issue

*Vote: Mr. Quinn moved, and it was seconded, to approve the RFT of \$3,632.00 for the telecommunications upgrade. The motion carried unanimously.*

- **FY 2016 Budget Cycle: Preliminary Schedule; Liaison assignments; FinCom Member Priorities; Updated Rating Agency Budget Recommendation** - Discussion

- The FY 2016 Budget Cycle preliminary meeting schedule dates and timeframe was reviewed to include the I Budget Development Phase; II Budget Review Phase; III Budget Approval Phase.
- Ms. Wills noted the budget packets have been distributed to the town department heads with level services and a 2% Cost of Living Adjustments. The department presentation to the BOS is November 22, 2014.
- Mr. Andrews reported to the Committee that the Town recently received a Green Communities Grant for \$248,000 to purchase and replace streetlights in town to LED.
- The Liaison assignments were noted.

- **Minutes:** July 14, 2014

*Vote: Mr. Ebling moved, and it was seconded, to approve the minutes of July 14, 2014. The motion carried unanimously.*

- **Next Meetings**

- Wednesday, November 12, 2014 (Report on draft FY14 Audit) at Town Hall
- Wednesday, November 19, 2014 (Joint meeting with Hamilton FinCom & HWRSD) at Buker School
- Wednesday, December 17, 2014 (Audit Report at Town Hall
- Mr. Andrews noted the Town meeting was moved to April 11, 2015, due to Easter.

- **Other matters, as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the Chair (discussion only)**

The Committee was encouraged to attend the department budget presentation to the BOS on November 22, 2014.

- **Adjournment**

The FinCom unanimously adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley  
10.21.14

WFC 10.16.14